

Medical Baseline for Electricity and Natural Gas Utilities



California Public Utilities Commission Consumer Facts

What is Medical Baseline?

All residential customers are billed a certain amount of their natural gas and electricity use at the utility's lowest residential rate. This is called the "Baseline Allowance" and it is set depending on what climate zone your home is in and whether it is the utility's "winter" or "summer" season. Extra allowances of natural gas and electricity are billed at the lowest rate for customers who rely on life support equipment, or those who have life threatening illnesses or compromised immune systems. The extra allowances are called Medical Baseline.

"Life support equipment" means equipment that uses mechanical or artificial means to sustain, restore, or supplant a vital function, or mechanical equipment that is relied upon for mobility both within and outside of buildings. This includes:

- All types of respirators, iron lungs, hemodialysis machines, suction machines, electric nerve stimulators, pressure pads and pumps, aerosol tents, electrostatic and ultrasonic nebulizers, compressors, IPBB machines and motorized wheelchairs.

Also, in consideration of their increased heating and cooling needs, the Medical Baseline allowance is available to:

- Paraplegics and quadriplegics, multiple sclerosis patients, scleroderma patients, and people being treated for a life threatening illness or who have a compromised immune system.

How do I apply?

Contact your gas and electric companies for an application form and have your licensed physician, or other authorized person, confirm your condition and sign the form. Then return the form to the utility.

Need help with a utility complaint? Call 1-800-649-7570, or use the complaint form at: www.cpuc.ca.gov.

Want someone to speak at your community group meeting? Call the CPUC Outreach Program in Los Angeles: 213-576-7058, in San Diego: 619-525-4309, in Northern California: 415-703-2074. [Feb. 2004]